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How Catholics Read the Bible

- Most scholars agree that the stories of Jesus were recited orally.
- As the apostles were martyred, the early Church realized they need to write the stories of Jesus for subsequent generations.
- It was the early Church leaders that determined which books were included in the canon of scripture.

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Introduction

- Christianity is an inspired religion.
- As Catholics, we believe Jesus founded one Church guided by the Holy Spirit.
- Apostolic succession continues until today.

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Introduction

- Bishops have an important place in the transmission of Tradition called the *magisterium*.
- Through them, Sacred Scripture and Tradition are reinterpreted for the modern day.

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Introduction

The Deposit of Faith

Sacred Scriptures	Sacred Tradition
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Genesis 3:1-24

- Genesis 3:1-24

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Genesis 22:1-18

- Genesis 22:1-18

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Exodus 3:4-14

- Exodus 3:4-14

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Psalm 23

- Psalm 23

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Isaiah 53:1-12

- Isaiah 53:1-12

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Matthew 5:1-16

- Sermon on the Mount

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John 6

- Bread of Life Discourse

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Acts 2

- The descent of the Holy Spirit.

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Revelation

- Revelation 12:1-6

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How Catholics Read the Bible

- The Jewish Scriptures prefigure the Christian Scriptures. Remember Isaac?
- The Jewish Scriptures tell the story of the Jewish people from the start of history, through slavery, foundation of a country, then losing that country and finally returning from exile.
- Throughout that history, the Jewish people stay faithful to God and lay the foundation for the savior.

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How Catholics Read the Bible

- By just going to Mass regular, you will hear most of the Gospels and a portion of the important parts of the rest of the Bible.
- Since right before Vatican II; Catholics have been encouraged to read, pray, and discuss the Bible.

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How Catholics Read the Bible

- First, we accept the Bible as the *inspired* word of God.
- “God is the author of Sacred Scripture because He inspired its human authors; He acts in them and by means of them. He thus gives assurance that their writings teach without error his saving truth” CCC 134 citing DV 11.
- Catholics are not bible literalists, for example the Church does not teach that creation only took six days.

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How Catholics Read the Bible

- Second, we read the Bible with a sense of tradition and an awareness of the time the passages were written.
- The historical-critical method is trying to understand the world behind the text as the author was composing the work.
- “In order to discover the sacred authors’ intention, the reader must take into account the conditions of their time and culture, the literary genres in use at that time, and the modes of feeling, speaking, and narrating then current” CCC 110.

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How Catholics Read the Bible

- Third, we look at the Bible (specifically books within it) as a whole.
- We call this narrative criticism, that is trying to understand the work as a story.
- For example, in John's gospel, Jesus performs only seven miracles (signs) and they build up to the resurrection, why?

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How Catholics Read the Bible

- Fourth, and perhaps most important, is that we pray with the Bible.
- Lectio divina-
 1. Read- slowly and several times
 2. Meditate-move towards meditating
 3. Pray- how did the text inspire you
 4. Contemplate- be in the presence of God

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How Catholics Read the Bible

- Prayer- Ignatian contemplation
 1. Beginning prayer- ask God to open your mind to the passage.
 2. Read slowly, place yourself in the text, participate in the passage both active and passive.
 3. Ending prayer- reflect on your experience and thank God for the time together.
